

WO 97/23552 describes cellulose sponges (not sponge cloths) and processes for producing them. These sponges are produced from a cellulose/NMMO solution which is mixed with a pore former and a blowing agent. The mixture is subsequently exposed to conditions under which the blowing agent decomposes, causing the cellulose solution to foam. This produces the large pores which are typical of sponges and which are undesirable in a sponge cloth.

Page 8, line 17, delete "10 to 16 Torr", and insert --1.333 to 2.133 kPa (10 to 16 Torr)--;
line 21, delete "200 Torr", and insert --26.66 kPa (200 Torr)--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims:

1. (Amended) A sponge cloth which is based on cellulose and has been provided with an internal reinforcement, capable of being obtained [obtainable] by [the] an amine oxide process without use of blowing agents.

Claim 3, line 1, after "claim 1", delete "or 2".

4. (Amended) The sponge cloth of [one or more of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, including at least one plasticizer.

5. (Amended) The sponge cloth of [one or more of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, impregnated with a biocidally active agent.

Claim 6, line 5, after "fibers," insert --but no blowing agent,--.

Claim 8, line 1, after "claim 6", delete "or 7".

9. (Amended) The process of claim 6, wherein the coagulation bath comprises a 5

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to 50% by weight aqueous amine oxide solution[, preferably a 5 to 50% by weight aqueous NMMO solution].

Claim 11, line 1, after "claim 6", delete "or 7".

13. (Amended) The process of claim 6, wherein the pore former fraction is 30 to 90% by weight[, preferably 70 to 85% by weight,] based on the total weight of the sponge cloth raw material.

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14. (Amended) The process of claim 6, wherein the cellulose fraction is 0.5 to 10.0% by weight[, preferably 1.0 to 5.0% by weight], based on the total weight of the sponge cloth raw material.

Claim 15, line 1, after "claim 6", delete "or 7".

16. (Amended) The process of claim 6 wherein the plasticizer fraction is 1 to 15% by weight[, preferably 2 to 10% by weight,] based on the dry weight of the finished sponge cloth.

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⌈ Please add the following new claims: ⌋

17. A process according to claim 9, wherein the weight is 5 to 50% of an aqueous NMMO solution.

18. A process according to claim 13, wherein the weight is 70 to 85%.

19. A process according to claim 14, wherein the weight is 1.0 to 5.0%.

20. A process according to claim 16, wherein the weight is 2 to 10%.

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